

## Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 NEW DE 03637 110656Z

12

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

EB-07 OMB-01 /070 W

----- 084349

R 101300Z MAR 76 ZDK CTG RUEHCS #0819W

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4570

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL

AMCONSUL MADRAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 3637

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJECT: MRS. GANDI EMPHASIZES RURAL REFORMS

REF: NEW DELHI A-25

SUMMARY: WITH AN EYE TOWARD LAGGING PROGRESS IN RURAL REFORMS AND THE APPROACHING MONSOONS, MRS. GANDHI IS PUTTING THE PRESSURE ON FOR MORE AND FASTER RESULTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RURAL-ORIENTED PARTS OF HER 20 POINT PROGRAM. THE BULK OF HER PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN RECENT WEEKS HAS BEEN DEVOTED TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC THEMES, SUCH AS UPLIFTING THE RURAL POOR, QUICK REDISTRIBUTION OF LAND, DEBT RELIEF MEASURES, AND THE PROVISION OF HOUSING SITES FOR UNTOUCHABLES AND TRIBALS. SHE HAS EMPHASIZED THE NEED TO ELIMINATE THE LEGAL ROADBLOCKS TO HER RURAL PROGRAMS AND TO INVOLVE STUDENTS, YOUTH, INTELLECTUALS AND OTHER GROUPS IN IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES. THE SLOW PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RURAL REFORMS CAN BE TRACED TO THE SAME BASIC BUREAUCRATIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL OBSTACLES THAT HAVE DISSIPATED PAST EFFORTS. THESE OBSTACLES HAVE REMAINED BASICALLY UNAFFECTED BY THE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 NEW DE 03637 110656Z

EMERGENCY. OUR IMPRESSION GAINED FROM VISITS TO RURAL AREAS IS THAT THERE HAS BEEN SOME FORWARD MOMENTUM IN SEVERAL AREAS, SUCH AS LAND DISTRIBUTION AND THE HOUSING SITE PROGRAM. BUT IT HAS BEEN MARGINAL THUS FAR, CONSIDERABLY LESS THAN THE STATISTICAL SUCCESSES CLAIMED BY STATE GOVERNMENTS. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIME MINISTER GANDHI HAS GIVEN INCREASING ATTENTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONGRESS/GOI SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROGRAMS OVER THE PAST FEW WEEKS. SHE DEVOTED THE BULK OF RECENT SPEECHES IN DELHI AND WEST BENGAL TO UPLIFTING THE RURAL POOR, REDISTRIBUTION OF LAND, DEBT RELIEF AND THE PROVISION OF HOUSING SITES FOR UNTOUCHABLES. A CONFERENCE OF CHIEF MINISTERS HELD IN NEW DELHI ON MARCH 5-6 FOCUSED SOLELY ON SPEEDIER AND MORE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF HER 20 POINT PROGRAM. INAUGURATING THE CONFERENCE, MRS. GANDHI NOTED THAT IMPLEMENTATION OF RURAL REFORMS IN LAGGING. SHE URGED THE CHIEF MINISTERS TO EXCHANGE IDEAS AND PRODUCE SUGGESTIONS OF "STEPS WHICH WILL MAKE IMPLEMENTATION MUCH FASTER."

2. THE CONFERENCE EMPHASIZED REMOVING THE JUDICIAL ROADBLOCKS TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROGRAMS, PARTICULARLY LAND REFORM. MRS. GANDHI CALLED FOR THE ELIMINATION OF "DELAYS WHICH ARE CAUSED BY WRITS OR JUDICIAL INTERPRETATION" HINDERING LAND REFORM EFFORTS. NEARLY ALL OF THE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONFERENCE DEALT WITH RATIONALIZING AND STREAMLINING EXISTING STATE-LEVEL LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE LAND REFORM PROCEDURES. ONE CALLED FOR THE EXAMINATION OF WAYS TO INSULATE LAND REFORMS FROM JUDICIAL REVIEW. THE CONFERENCE RESOLVED THAT EXCEPT WHERE THERE ARE SERIOUS LEGAL HURDLES, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAND CEILING LAWS "WILL BE COMPLETED" BY JUNE 30, 1976.

3. IN HER SPEECHES THE PRIME MINISTER PLACED EMPHASIS ON THE INVOLVEMENT OF DIFFERENT GROUPS AND INSTITUTIONS IN IMPLEMENTING EFFORTS, INCLUDING YOUTH WORKERS, INTELLECTUALS, WOMEN, VILLAGE PANCHAYATS, AND CONGRESS COMMITTEES AT THE LOCAL AND STATE LEVELS. SPEAKING IN CALCUTTA ON MARCH 2, THE PRIME MINISTER REMARKED THAT THE "INVOLVEMENT OF THE PEOPLE WAS ESSENTIAL IN MAKING ANY PROGRAM OR PLAN A SUCCESS. THE GOVERNMENT COULD ONLY MAKE THE PLANS OR PROGRAMS. UNLESS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 NEW DE 03637 110656Z

THERE WAS INVOLVEMENT OF PEOPLE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCH PROGRAMS, THEY COULD NOT BE A SUCCESS."

4. COMMENT: WHILE THERE IS LITTLE NEW IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S RHETORIC ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC THEMES, THERE IS A THREAD OF EXASPERATION RUNNING THROUGH HER REMARKS RELATING TO THE SLOW PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING REFORMS.

THE TRADITIONAL OBSTACLES THAT HAVE PLAGUED RURAL REFORMS SINCE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE HAVE NOT BEEN ELIMINATED BY THE EMERGENCY. THE LOCAL POWER STRUCTURE REMAINS DOMINATED BY INTERESTS WHOSE WEALTH AND SOCIO-POLITICAL STANDING IS BASED ON LAND. THEIR INFLUENCE IS ELT IN THE CONGRESS PARTY AND IN ADMINISTRATIVE AND ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS. THE LOWEST LEVEL GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRATS ARE OFTEN CORRUPT AND VULNERABLE TO PRESSURES AND THREATS FROM LOCAL ELITES. LAND RECORDS ARE EASILY TAMPERED WITH OR EVEN REPLACED, AND ARE OFTEN WAY OUT OF DATE. INFORMATION ACQUIRED DURING TRAVELS BY EMBOFFS IN RURAL AREAS INDICATES THAT NEARLY ALL OF THE LAND DISTRIBUTED UNDER THE 20 POINT PROGRAM TO DATE HAS BEEN VILLAGE PUBLIC LAND, NOT LAND SEIZED FROM LANDOWNERS UNDER THE LAND CEILING ACT. THE HOUSING SITE PROGRAM HAS GONE FORWARD IN A NUMBER OF STATES, BUT THERE ARE COMPLAINTS FROM THE LOCAL LEVEL THAT IT IS BEING IMPLEMENTED TOO HASTILY WITH AN EYE TO STATISTICS, NOT TO SUCH CRUCIAL FACTORS AS THE AVAILABILITY OF WATER, EMPLOYMENT, ETC., FOR TENANTS. IT IS ALSO EVIDENT THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S VARIOUS DEBT RELIEF STRICTURES WILL DO LITTLE TO SEPARATE THE RURAL INDIAN FROM THE RAPACIOUS MONEY LENDER UNLESS ALTERNATE SOURCES OF CREDIT ARE ESTABLISHED. ONE UP BUREAUCRAT ASSOCIATED WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RURAL BANK PROGRAM TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT ONLY 12 SUCH BANKS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED AROUND THE COUNTRY, INCLUDING ONE IN UP, WHICH HAS 90 MILLION PEOPLE. THE OFFICIAL COMMENTED THAT EVEN AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RURAL BANKS, THE FARMER MAY CONTINUE TO GO TO THE MONEY LENDER, WHO IS FAMILIAR WITH HIS NEEDS AND CAN HELP HIM MORE QUICKLY, RATHER THAN AN IMPERSONAL INSTITUTION LIKE A GOVERNMENT BANK LINED WITH RED TAPE.

5. TAKEN TOGETHER, THE GAINS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 NEW DE 03637 110656Z

RURAL REFORMS SINCE THE EMERGENCY HAVE BEEN MARGINAL. BUREAUCRATS AND SOME TOP CONGRESS LEADERS ARE MORE ENTHUSIASTIC THAT SOMETHING CAN E DONE AND AR WORKING MORE ENERGETICALLY AND WITH LESS INTERFERENCE THAN BEFORE TO BRING IT ABOUT. BUT, AS WE COMMENTED IN REFAIR, THE PROCESS OF REFORM IN RURAL AREAS HAS TO BE A LONG TERM AFFAIR. SUBSTANTIAL AND LASTING PROGRESS WILL TAKE YEARS IF NOT DECADES TO BRING ABOUT IN THE PRESENT SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT.

SAXBE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS, LAND REFORMS, LAND SETTLEMENT  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 10 MAR 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** saccheem  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976NEWDE03637  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** n/a  
**Errors:** n/a  
**Film Number:** D760091-1111  
**From:** NEW DELHI  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t197603111/aaaagfmk.tel  
**Line Count:** 169  
**Locator:** TEXT ON MICROFILM, TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 NEW DELHI A-25  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** saccheem  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 18 JUN 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <18 JUN 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <05 OCT 2004 by saccheem>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** <DBA CORRECTED> mcm 970922  
**Subject:** MRS. GANDI EMPHASIZES RURAL REFORMS  
**TAGS:** EAGR, IN, PINT, (GANDHI, INDIRA)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006